



**Soil Science Society of America Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
Thursday Dec. 19, 2024, 11:00am-12:15pm (Central)**

**Resources: [Strategic Plan, Bylaws, Minutes](#) | [Membership Dashboard](#) | [Board Outreach](#)**

President Michael Thompson called the meeting to order.

Board members present:

President: Michael Thompson, Iowa State  
 President-Elect: Samira Daroub, Univ. of Florida  
 Past President: Carrie Laboski, USDA-ARS  
 Ag Soil & Food Systems Group: Maysoon Mikha, USDA-ARS;  
 Hero Gollany, USDA-ARS; Dorivar Ruiz Diaz, K-State  
 CPSS Rep: Jacob Berkowitz, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
 Fundamental Soil Science Group: Rebecca Lybrand, UC-Davis;  
 Ganga Hettiarachchi, K-State  
 Grad Student Rep: Megan Bourns, K-State  
 Soil & Ecosystem Processes: Ron Reuter, Oregon State;  
 Thorsten Knappenberger, Auburn  
 Ex-officio without vote: CEO Jim Cudahy; Program Planning  
 Officer & Incoming President-Elect Aaron Daigh, Univ. of  
 Nebraska; ASF Chair Stella Salvo, Bayer CropScience  
Unable to attend:  
 DEI-at-Large: Xia Zhu-Barker, UW-Madison

Early Career Rep: Dianna Bagnall, Soil Health Institute  
 Ed & Practicing Professionals: Clay Robinson, CRC Consulting  
 Fundamental Soil Science Group: Maxine Levin, USDA-NRCS;  
 Editor-in-Chief Craig Rasmussen, Univ. of Arizona  
Also attending:  
 Incoming Ag Soil & Food Systems Julie Howe, Texas A&M Univ.  
 Incoming Program Planning Shannon Osborne, USDA-ARS  
 Incoming Editor-in-Chief Markus Flury  
 Susan Chapman, Special Projects Director  
 Susan Dearing-Bond, Development Director  
 Dawn Gibas, Certifications Director  
 Sanford Moore, Finance Director  
 Ian Popkewitz, IT & Operations Director  
 Luther Smith, Chief Administrative Officer  
 Sara Uttech, Governance Director  
 Susan Varghese, People & Culture Director  
 Matt Wascavage, Publications Director

S003 SSSA Board of Directors

1. Division/Group/Committee Reports:

Facilitators for Division/Group Reports			
April	May	June	July/August
Michael Thompson Xia Zhu-Barker	Maysoon Mikha Clay Robinson	Jacob Berkowitz Maxine Levin	Dianna Bagnall Thorsten Knappenberger Ron Reuter
September	October	December	
Ganga Hettiarachchi Dorivar Ruiz Diaz	Megan Bourns Samira Daroub - World Soil Day Dec. 5: U.S. National Committee for Soil Science	Hero Gollany Rebecca Lybrand	

- Hero Gollany provided a summary of the Nutrient Management & Soil and Plant Analysis, Soil and Water Management & Conservation, Soil Fertility & Plant Nutrition sessions and symposia held during the CANVAS meeting in San Antonio, highlighting the presentations and the successful linkages made within and across the divisions.
- Rebecca Lybrand shared her report, highlighting feedback from members of the Soil Mineralogy Division, noting the positives of CANVAS and the concerns about the review process of SSSAJ. She suggested the need for better communication about the improvements to the journal. Michael Thompson introduced Marcus Flury, the new incoming SSSA Editor-in-Chief.

2. ACTION: Consensus to approve Consent Agenda:

- Dec. 19, 2024 SSSA Board of Directors Meeting Agenda
- Nov. 10, 2024 SSSA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

3. CEO Jim Cudahy provided a Headquarters Update that included:

- Website Redesign: Launches Dec. 17, Member Hub launches in mid-January.
- ACSESS Board Meeting Task Force formed to look at board meeting structure, cadence
- Board Members: Outreach resources online, including PowerPoint, to make presentations on your campus, elsewhere: [www.sciencesocieties.org/about-society/outreach](http://www.sciencesocieties.org/about-society/outreach)

#### 4. Board Working Group Updates:

- Working Group 2 Restructuring SSSA Divisions: Samira Daroub, who led Working Group 2, provided an overview of the group's efforts to look at restructuring SSSA divisions with a focus on the Annual Meeting and the potential benefits of change. She underscored that more data would be needed for further analysis. The group will continue to meet in 2025.
- Working Group 3 Publications: Thorsten Knappenberger, who led Working Group 3, discussed the group's efforts to understand the needs of members in terms of publications. He mentioned the challenges of surveying members and reaching non-academic members. Rebecca Lybrand reported that some members had negative experiences with the current publication process, leading them to publish in other journals. The group agreed to continue their discussions in the coming year.

#### ACS528 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in ASA, CSSA, and SSSA Committee

Chair Tiffany Carter provided an overview of the DEI Committee's activities across 7 working groups: professional conduct, ethics, education and training, policy review, measuring success, mentoring, and Annual Meeting planning. Accomplishments include: DEI/safe space advocate at the meeting, webinars on reducing bias and inclusive practices, statistics report for demographic information, and piloting a mentoring program. The committee is finalizing ethics statements and preparing for a DEI survey to inform future recommendations. Plans for 2025 include Code of Conduct review, Education & Training webinars, a new CSA News series, and a Communications Working Group. The SSSA DEI Board Member-at-Large is Xia Zhu-Barker.

#### S101 SSSA Nominations Committee

Governance Director Sara Uttech announced the 2025 SSSA Elections will be held March 3-April 3, 2025. The Division Nominations Committees submitted their 2025 candidates except the Soil Biology & Biochemistry Division. The President-Elect Nominations Committee, chaired by Michael Thompson, will meet in January 2025, and issued a last call for candidates as three candidates are currently submitted; we will also invite past candidates to re-submit their nominations.

President Michael Thompson issued a final thank you to outgoing board members with an informal feedback session:

- *What is one thing you have appreciated about serving on the Board?*
  - *What is one thing if on the Board another year, would you like to engage in?*
1. Past President Carrie Laboski, USDA-ARS, University Park, PA
  2. Ag Soil & Food Systems Group: Maysoon Mikha, USDA-ARS, Akron, CO
  3. Program Planning Officer Aaron Daigh, University of Nebraska
  4. Fundamental Soil Science Group Maxine Levin, University of Maryland
  5. Editor-in-Chief Craig Rasmussen, University of Arizona

Consensus to adjourn.